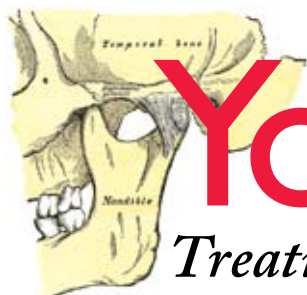


Could my bite make my head hurt?



You BET it can!

By David M. Kaffey, DDS

Treating Frequent Headaches...Without Drugs

If you suffer from frequent headaches, neck pain, jaw pain, and dizziness, you might want to visit a dentist trained to treat those conditions before you reach for any painkillers.

People with misaligned bites often have jaw and neck muscles that are overworked.

Those overtired muscles can lead to a number of ailments - including headaches, neck and jaw pain - that people don't associate with dental problems.

LVI Global, a leading post-graduate training facility for dentists, specifically deals with such issues. LVI Global trains

dentists to use a number of techniques that help improve jaw position by focusing on what's known as the "neuromuscular bite." Here's a closer look at how a neuromuscular dentist might treat the pain caused by what is known as TMD:

A Significant Problem Affecting Ten Million Americans

According to the National Institutes of Health, TMD, or temporomandibular (jaw joint) disorder, affects more than ten million American adults and affects women twice as often as men. Common signs and symptoms include headaches, even migraines, pain in the head and neck, painful clicking or popping of the jaw joint, pain behind the eyes and ears, difficulty opening, muscle tenderness, dizziness, deviation to one side when opening, lack of concentration, and general facial pain.



Diagnosis

When checking for TMD, a neuromuscular dentist takes a thorough patient's history and does a physical exam of the teeth, posture, head and neck. The dentist also may conduct a series of tests using noninvasive instruments. If it is determined that the patient's bite is the likely cause of the pain, the neuromuscular dentist will identify a new jaw position using a Myomonitor. The Myomonitor is a device that delivers a gentle electrical stimulation to your muscles. This mild stimulation after a short period will cause the patient's jaw muscles to relax and reposition the jaw to a more comfortable position.

Treatment

There are a number of treatment options, but the process often starts with a patient wearing for a short period of time what's known as a neuromuscular orthotic. An orthotic is a

custom-made, plastic appliance worn over the teeth. It does not permanently alter a patient's bite.

If, after wearing the appliance for a period of three to four months, a patient's symptoms are significantly reduced or eliminated, the diagnosis of an improperly aligned jaw is confirmed. When that's the case, patients have several permanent treatment options. Depending on the particular situation, they can include selective alterations to the biting surfaces of the teeth, orthodontics or crowns (caps) to maintain the jaw in the previously determined

relaxed state. Often times, a combination of these treatments are used and, as a bonus to eliminating the TMD symptoms, patients end up with a beautiful vibrant new smile.

Consult a Dentist

If you have frequent headaches, pain in your face, jaw joint popping or clicking, dizziness, or any of the symptoms discussed consult a properly trained dentist. You may be suffering from TMD. You are not alone and help is available.



Dr. David M. Kaffey's is a LVI Neuromuscular dentist who's practice is dedicated to cosmetics, TMD therapy, Dental Implants, and improved athletic performance with the Pure Power Mouthguard. His

practice, Main Line Dental Aesthetics, is located at 12 South Valley Rd., Paoli, PA.